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Washington, DC Metro Area Reflects Turmoil Across Nation Caused By 'Ridesharing' Companies Uber and Lyft

*Alleged sexual assault and kidnapping, lawsuits, driver protests,
cease and desists and regulatory ambiguity litter region*

Rockville, MD—The Washington, DC Metro area, comprised of the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia, is in a tumultuous state due to so-called “ridesharing” companies Uber and Lyft. The region has not only seen a massive taxicab driver protest, an alleged sexual assault and separate kidnapping by Uber drivers, but is also the battleground for two major lawsuits and a cease-and-desist order in response to “ridesharing” companies.

The nation’s capital will remain in limbo until the District of Columbia Council returns from summer recess and begins [drafting legislation](#) regarding “ridesharing” companies. This legislative proposal aims to determine whether “ridesharing” drivers carry adequate liability insurance coverage needed to operate in the city. In order for drivers, passengers and pedestrians to be covered by the insurance policies of “ridesharing” vehicles, the companies must provide primary commercial auto liability insurance coverage.

“I want them to understand there is ambiguity,” DC Council Member Mary Cheh [told a local news outlet](#). “There is risk. In the face of that, they can make a decision. My own decision, my own personal decision, would be not to use these services.”

This proposal follows [the massive protest](#) of taxi drivers in June that gridlocked streets from East Potomac Park to Freedom Plaza. The protest organizers were also members of the Teamster-affiliated D.C. Taxi Operators Association, assembled to express their grievances about the lack of responsible public safety regulations for “ridesharing” companies.

[Police recently arrested an Uber driver](#) and charged him with second-degree sexual abuse against a female passenger in Washington, DC.

In early July, Uber passenger Ryan Simonetti, CEO of New York-based Convene, was reportedly [kidnapped by his driver](#), held against his will and involved in a high speed chase through Washington, DC and Virginia.

Additionally, eight Northern Virginia taxicab and limousine companies [filed a civil lawsuit this month](#) against “ridesharing” companies Uber and Lyft. These companies include: Alexandria White Top, Fairfax White Top, Arlington Blue Top, Love Limousine (Stafford), VIP Cab Company (Alexandria), Checker Cab (Manassas), Prince William Yellow Cab (Prince William), and King Cab (Alexandria). The suit, which was

filed in Fairfax Circuit Court, argues that Uber and Lyft have continued to operate in the state without the required licenses and permits.

The lawsuit was filed after the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles [issued cease and desist letters](#) to Uber and Lyft in June, citing the company as operating without proper permits.

A separate [lawsuit in Maryland](#) is comprised of 30 taxicab companies, including two Montgomery County-based companies Barwood, Inc. and Sun Cab of Montgomery County, and Yellow & Checker Cab of Baltimore, addresses the impact of Uber's alleged illegal practices on the companies, their drivers and the public. The suit, which seeks injunctive relief as well as compensatory and treble damages, was filed in the Circuit Court for Baltimore City.

"Uber and Lyft keep saying, 'Trust me, we'll make sure you're safe and insured,' but when someone says, 'Prove it,' they howl that any regulatory oversight is somehow anti-innovation. What, just because they have an app? So do most taxi companies. Their argument is a tired, threadbare deception," said Dave Sutton, spokesperson for the 'Who's Driving You?' campaign.

Nineteen states, including Maryland, plus the District of Columbia, have issued [consumer warnings](#) that "ridesharing" insurance is unsafe. In Virginia, the Independent Insurance Agents of Virginia has also warned consumers of the dangerous insurance gaps in the policies of "ridesharing" companies.

ABOUT US:

'Who's Driving You?' is a public safety campaign designed to educate the public about the dangers of unlicensed transportation services. It is an initiative of the Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association, an international non-profit trade association whose membership consists of 1,100 licensed transportation companies. For more information, visit www.WhosDrivingYou.org, follow us on Twitter (@WhosDrivingYou) and follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/WhosDrivingYou).

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